

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1-16 and 18-24 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claim 1 is amended, claim 24 is added, and claim 17 is cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer. Support for the claims can be found throughout the specification, including the original claims and the drawings. Withdrawal of the rejections and allowance in due course are respectfully solicited.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, it is respectfully submitted that the application is in condition for allowance. If the Examiner believes that any additional changes would place the application in better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned, **JOANNA K. MASON**, at the telephone number listed below.

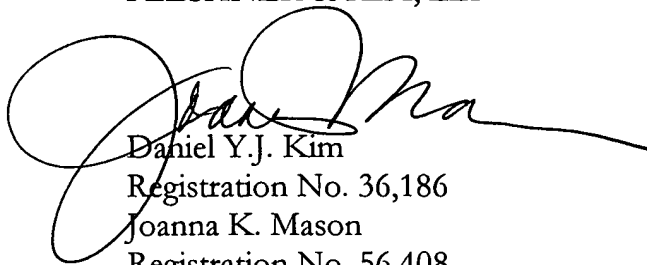
To the extent necessary, a petition for an extension of time under 37 C.F.R. 1.136 is hereby made. Please charge any shortage in fees due in connection with the filing of this,

Serial No. **09/996,718**
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concurrent and future replies, including extension of time fees, to Deposit Account 16-0607 and
please credit any excess fees to such deposit account.

Respectfully submitted,
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